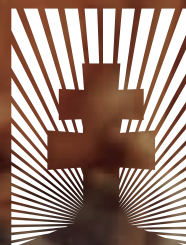


RELIGIOUS

REGIÓN
DE MURCIA
RELIGIOUS
AND CULTURAL
TOURISM



CARAVACA
DE LA CRUZ 2024
AÑO JUBILAR

1

JUBILEE
CITY

1

A FULL
JUBILEE YEAR

6

RELIGIOUS
FESTIVALS
OF INTERNATIONAL
TOURISTIC INTEREST

3000

DAYS OF
SUNSHINE
PER YEAR

19

AVERAGE
TEMPERATURE
DEGREES



IT MAKES
YOU HAPPY





REGIÓN DE MURCIA **PILGRIMAGE SITES**

If you want to visit the Región de Murcia, you have to have your feet on the ground. With every step, you'll experience sublime emotions that will elevate your spirit above the earthly realm.

The Región de Murcia is an exceptional gathering place for Christianity, as demonstrated by the fact that in Pope St. John Paul II granted Caravaca de la Cruz the honor of celebrating a Jubilee Year In *Perpetuum*, every 7 years. In this way, Caravaca became just the fifth city in the world authorized to celebrate the Perpetual Jubilee, together with Santiago de Compostela, Santo Toribio de Liébana, Rome and Jerusalem.

The religious tradition in the Región de Murcia imbues its every church and basilica, with worship and fervor permeating every corner, town and city. Discover beautiful places of devotion, of pilgrimage, and legends, religious festivities and a heritage of incalculable value.

CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

+ Info

www.turismocaravaca.org
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

Caravaca de la Cruz is a city located in a borderland, a crossroads between the regions of Murcia and Granada. Iberians, Romans and Muslims passed through this town, built around its castle, which, although of Arab origin, was guarded by The Templars and later by the Order of Santiago. But Caravaca is, essentially, the City of the Cross.

According to legend, on May 3, 1232, the Moorish King Abu Zeid converted to Christianity when he saw two angels bring a *lignum crucis* (wooden cross) down from the sky so that the priest, Ginés Pérez de Chirinos, imprisoned in the Castle/Fortress of Caravaca, could say Mass. This story led to the construction of the Santuario de la Vera Cruz (Sanctuary of the True Cross) in 1617 on the grounds of the fortress itself. Without a doubt, it is the main monument of this town in the northwest of Murcia, its monumental Cehegin red marble portal being of special note.

In 1998 the Holy See granted the Shrine and the Brotherhood of the True Cross papal privileges and indulgences to celebrate the Jubilee Year in Perpetuum every seven years.

Caravaca de la Cruz is looking forward to the arrival of thousands of pilgrims during its next Jubilee Year in 2024. Mysticism, legend and tradition have shaped a story that is kept alive here, and deserves to be experienced at least once in a lifetime.



CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ, JUBILEE YEAR IN *PERPETUUM*

Caravaca de la Cruz has the exceptional privilege - shared with Jerusalem, Rome, Santiago de Compostela and Santo Toribio de Liébana - of being able to grant plenary indulgences at any time, and not only during the celebration of its Jubilee Year. To receive this dispensation, the only requirement is to travel to Caravaca de la Cruz accompanied by at least 2 more people (that is, a group of at least 3) and, of course, comply with the rest of the conditions that are set in a Jubilee Year.

+ Info

www.diocesisdecartagena.org



CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

CARAVACA, A TERESIAN CITY

Integrated into the Teresian Cities tourism route, Caravaca boasts a convent founded by Santa Teresa de Jesús in 1576. The building is comprised of two distinct parts: the Church of St. Joseph (Iglesia de San José) and the Convent of the Carmelite Nuns (Monasterio de las Monjas Carmelitas). The church, with a single nave, was rebuilt in the 18th century, its decoration in the Rococo style. The convent, currently uninhabited, still preserves areas that beckon us to live the experience of life during the era of St. Teresa. St. John of the Cross passed through here seven times, and in 1587 founded the Convento de Carmen de Carmelitas Descalzos de Caravaca, very close to where St. Teresa's was.

Teresa sent him expressly to attend to the congregation first hand, as she could not do so in person due to an illness, making the City of the Cross one of the few boasting an entity founded by both St. Teresa and St. John. The former would carry with her a Caravaca Cross until the end of her days, which is kept in the Convent of the Discalced Carmelite Mothers in Brussels, denoting her close relationship with Caravaca and with the True Cross, but also the eagerness with which pilgrims acquire the Caravaca Cross as a symbol of their Faith.

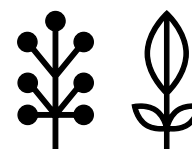
Caravaca lays claim to one of the premier sets of religious architecture in the Región de Murcia: the Church of Solitude (Iglesia de la Soledad), the Church of the Savior and the Society of Jesus, El Templete, the Convent of Santa Clara, the Hermitages (Ermitas) of St. Helena (Elena), St. Sebastian, and La Reja (The Grill); and the magnificent Basilica of the Holy and True Cross (Santísima y Vera Cruz), are not-to-be-missed stops on a tour bound to make a deep impression on all pilgrims.

A fabulous network of spaces featuring a labyrinthine layout of alleys and squares in which it is easy to get lost...to find yourself again.

Caravaca is rightfully proud of its people, its cuisine, and its spirituality, as it is one of the towns with the most tourism sites in the Northwest of the Región de Murcia, welcoming travellers with open arms and leaving none of them indifferent.



CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ



FROM MUSEUM TO MUSEUM

Caravaca de la Cruz's cultural attractions include its museums, with its Fortress/Castle harboring one of the main ones: the Museum of the True Cross (Museo de la Vera Cruz), which houses goldsmithing and painting collections. Inside the art gallery six oil paintings on panels dating from the sixteenth century stand out, originals by Hernando de los Llanos, who was a protegee of Leonardo da Vinci. Goldsmithing highlights include the Custodia-Oensorio de la Cruz (monstrance), from the early sixteenth century; and the Portacruz de los Baños (cross bearer), a gift from Luis Fajardo, second Marquis of the Velez.



A PLACE WITH CHARM

Located just over two kilometers from the urban center of Caravaca, one of the most beautiful places in the Region awaits you: Las Fuentes del Marqués (Fountains of the Marquis). Springs of pure water, abundant nature and an indisputable charm will put you at ease. Here stands an ancient Templar Tower (Torreón Templario), steeped in legends. During the Middle Ages it served as an outpost for defense against Muslims, and it now houses the Nature Interpretation Center.



WITHOUT ANY OTHER LIGHT AND GUIDANCE BUT THAT WHICH BURNED IN MY HEART

The Way of Saint John of the Cross (El Camino de San Juan de la Cruz), between Beas de Segura and Caravaca de la Cruz, is the perfect route to follow in the footsteps of the great saint, who treaded it 7 times over the course of his life. The experience is unforgettable and extremely enriching, healthy, intimate and personal. You'll no longer be a walker, or a pilgrim... you will become an andariego, a rover. This is a call to share, to solidarity, to encounters, to austerity, to gratitude for nature and life... to break one's habits... The Way of St. John of the Cross (Camino de San Juan de la Cruz), runs through the Sierra de Segura, a mountain range that includes Beas de Segura, Hornos, Pontones, Santiago de la Espada (belonging to the province of Jaén, Andalusia) and, in its foothills, Nerpio (in the province of Albacete, Castilla-La Mancha), leading to Moratalla and Caravaca de la Cruz (both in the Región de Murcia).

More information at <http://caminodesanjuandelacruz.org>



FESTIVITIES OF THE HOLIEST AND TRUE CROSS

Las Fiestas de la Santísima y Vera Cruz, declared of International Touristic Interest in 2004, are held every year from May 1 to 5. On the second day, in addition, the castle hosts the popular and spectacular race of Los Caballos del Vino (Wine Horses). Nor can one miss the procession that takes place on May 3 through the streets of the old town, from the Church of the Savior to El Templete, undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and captivating moments of the festival. Special mention must be made of the "parliament" between the Moorish and Christian kings, and the Bath of the Cross (Baño de la Cruz) in El Templete, an activity drawing devoted throngs. And, as the festivities' grand finale, on May 5 it is time for the procession known as the (Ascent to the Sacred Relic of the Holy Basilica (Subida de la Sagrada Reliquia a la Basilica Santuario). If your visit does not coincide with these celebrations, you can find out everything about them at the Museo de los Caballos del Vino y el de la Fiesta (Wine Horses and Festival Museum).

MULA

+ Info

www.mula.es

www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es

www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

In the heart of the Región de Murcia we find the village of Mula, a monument-rich enclave whose historic center, declared a National Artistic Complex in 1981, will dazzle the most curious travelers.

We invite visitors to wander through its alleys and corners, as the surprises this place has in store are a delight for the eyes. Highlights include the Castillo de los Velez, an imposing sixteenth-century fortress from which the lord dominated his subjects beyond these lands by the River Mula.

But if this town is famous for anything it is, undoubtedly, its Holy Splinter (Santa Espina) and its Holy Week. Religious fervor and tradition converge on the Night of the Drums (Noche de los Tambores), a festival considered of National Touristic Interest and whose origins date back to the mid-nineteenth century. On the evening of Holy Tuesday, hundreds of drums beat in unison in what is probably the most exciting night of the year for local residents (muleños).

The Pilgrimage to the Hermitage of The Boy from Mula (Romería a la Ermita de El Niño de Mula) is another not-to-be-missed activity for the inhabitants of Mula, who every September 22, with great devotion and in a festive atmosphere, turn out for the return of the image of the Child Jesus from the Convento de la Encarnación to its hermitage, after having spent several weeks in different churches of the town.

And, if you want to make the very most of your stay in Mula, you can also visit some of its most interesting buildings, such as its Church of Saint Dominic (Iglesia de Santo Domingo), the Museum of Modern Art, and the Fundación Casa Pintada (Painted House Foundation), where the legacy of the world-famous artist Cristóbal Gabarrón is shared; the Museum of Iberian Art, El Cigarralejo, which houses the finest exhibition of Iberian art on the Peninsula; and the Real Monasterio de la Encarnación, at which the Poor Clares delight both neighbors and visitors with their delicious sweets, which they sell through the window.



ST. TERESA OF JESUS IN MULA

The Brotherhood of Our Lady of Carmen de Mula (Hermandad de Nuestra Señora del Carmen de Mula) founded on January 28, 1606, was characterized almost from its beginnings by a devotion to St Teresa of Jesus, aka St Teresa of Avila, today venerating a beautiful image of the saint from Avila, a work by the sculptor José Sánchez Lozano, from 1948. Last April, the priest of the Diocese of Cartagena (Murcia) Rev. Alfonso Alburquerque García donated to the Brotherhood of Our Lady of Carmen "first degree" relics; that is, bones of the body of St John of the Cross (San Juan de la Cruz) and St Teresa of Avila, a gesture that the Brotherhood will always be grateful for. Therefore, having the relics of these great Spanish saints in the City of Mula, at its Ermita (Hermitage) del Carmen, sets the Región de Murcia apart, and turns this hermitage into a site of Catholic pilgrimage.



THE HOLY SPLINTER

El Real Monasterio de la Encarnación houses, without a doubt, one of the "crown jewels" for devout Christians: the reliquary of the Holy Splinter, or Thorn, from the crown of thorns Jesus Christ wore on the Passion; and a lock of hair of the Virgin Mary.

Although the first news of the crown of thorns dates back to the fifth century, nothing was known about it until the eleventh, when it appeared in Constantinople. In 1238 Emperor Baldwin II offered the holy relic to Louis IX, King of France, seeking his support. To keep it, the monarch built the Holy Chapel of Paris, where it would remain until the French Revolution, when it was finally transferred to the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Over the centuries, the thorns were offered as gifts to different kings and nobles, being distributed throughout Christendom. Today some of them can be venerated, like the one in the Cathedral of Barcelona, or the one found in the Chapel of the Holy Thorn in the Real Monasterio de la Encarnación in Mula, assisted by the Eucharistic Communicators, Sisters of the Heavenly Father (Hermanas Comunicadoras del Padre Celestial) from Colombia.

MURCIA

+ Info

www.turismodemurcia.es
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

Murcia showcases a range of different artistic styles, boasting works of incalculable value. The city was founded in 831 by the Emir of Córdoba, Abderramán II, in an ideal location: the center of the Segura River valley. Its importance during the Arab era can be appreciated beholding the wall that surrounds it; standing 15 meters high, it had 95 towers. Some remnants are still visible in different places of the city, and can be seen at the Visitor Center of the Wall (La Muralla) in the Plaza de Santa Eulalia. Its importance is also evident from the numerous palatial archaeological remains remnants found in the Monasterio de Santa Clara la Real, which can be beheld today at the Museo de Santa Clara.

Delve into the old town, full of narrow streets named after guilds, such as the commercial areas of Platería (Silverwork), Trapería (Clothwork) and Jabonerías (Soaps), evidencing the intense activity that took place in the capital of the Region.

But it was from the 17th century onwards, and especially in the 18th, that Murcia saw an era of urban splendor, expanding beyond its walls, with numerous churches being built, mostly Baroque, including La Merced and San Miguel, Santa Ana, El Monasterio de Santa Clara la Real, Santo Domingo (St Dominic), Santa Eulalia and San Juan de Dios, which combine architectural art with an important pictorial and sculptural heritage, the works carved by Francisco Salzillo being of special note.



CATHEDRAL OF ST. MARY

Murcia's main monument is its Catedral de Santa María, whose construction began at the end of the 14th century. It is an eclectic ensemble of diverse artistic styles featuring a grandiose majesty. There are Gothic elements, such as the Puerta (Entrance) de los Apóstoles and La Capilla (Chapel) de los Velez; Renaissance ones, such as La Capilla (Chapel) de Junterón; and Baroque, with its spectacular imafrente, conceived as a gigantic altarpiece by Jaime Bort, being of special note. Of course, there is also its 90-meter tower, constructed in different phases between the 16th and 18th

centuries, and that is comprised of three parts. Next to the Cathedral, the 18th-century Palacio Episcopal also draws the admiration of tourists and pilgrims.

There are other magnificent examples of Baroque architecture at El Santuario (Sanctuary) de la Fuensanta and at the Monastery of the Hieronymites (Monasterio de los Jerónimos), also known as El Escorial Murciano.



HOLY WEEK AND SALZILLO: BAROQUE IMAGERY

Within the sacred art of the city, one cannot fail to visit the **Salzillo Museum**. The realism of the figures and the pasos (Holy Week image-bearing platforms) by the great Murcian **Francisco Salzillo**, brought out each Easter, are sure to impress, as will his well-known **Bethlehem**, born out of one of the most deeply rooted artisanal traditions in the Región de Murcia.

Murcia's Holy Week has been declared of **International Touristic Interest**. Its carved figures by Salzillo, and its "Nazarenos," penitents who give out candies and other presents, make this Holy Week a unique one in our country. The most striking procession is that on **Good Friday**, also known as Los Salzillos,

in which, at dawn, more than 4,000 Nazarenos come out wearing purple tunics and carrying genuine works of art made in the 18th century by the great Murcian Francisco Salzillo y Alcaraz. Without a doubt, the most picturesque procession is that of Los Coloraos, on Holy Wednesday. With more than 3,000 Nazarenos, this procession features the peculiarity of being headed by a large number of children. The oldest in Murcia, it is characterized by the giving out of candies, beans and other products denoting the link between the local orchards and Archconfraternity of the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Preciosísima Sangre de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo).

LORCA

+ Info

www.lorcaturismo.es
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

Lorca, known as the **Baroque City** for its historic center's important heritage elements, stages every year the "Biblical/Passion processions" of its **Holy Week**, declared of **International Touristic Interest** in 2007.

Chariots, riders, horses, floats, superb cloaks of gold and silk, and the famous rivalry between the **Paso Blanco and Azul** (White Float and Blue Float) make this one of the most spectacular Holy Week spectacles in all of Spain.

The brilliant artistic heritage of the City of the Sun is showcased in monuments from different eras. The ancient **Columna Miliaria** (Column), dating from the Roman era; its **castle** with its Torre (Tower) del Espolón, and Torre Alfonsina, a Christian contribution after the Reconquest, coexist by the Porche de San Antonio, the gate of the old walled enclosure that protected the city in the tenth century.

Added to this precious legacy are numerous churches and convents, which span from the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries; Baroque palaces and stately homes, such as **El Palacio de Guevara**; and that of **Los Condes** (Counts) **de San Julián**, and the Casa de los Mula.

Undoubtedly, the **military fortress**, which grew out of a predecessor, the medieval alcazaba, stands out, an impressively impregnable enclosure. Then there are the cobblestone streets around the Plaza de España (Square of Spain), with constructions featuring popular architecture a great traditional flavor, such as La Zapatería and La Cava.

Other monuments that will allow you to discover Lorca's religious dimension are the **Sanctuary of the Virgin of the Orchards** (Santuario de la Virgen de las Huertas), the **Collegiate Church of St Patrick** (Colegiata de San Patricio), the **Monumental Complex of Calvary** (Conjunto Monumental del Calvario), declared of Cultural Interest, and the **Bethlehem Museum** (Museo del Belén).



HOLY WEEK EMBROIDERY MUSEUMS

The **Holy Week Embroidery Museums** (Museos de Bordados) remind us that, in Lorca, it is Holy Week all year round. Through its exhibitions one can learn all about the rich heritage of its brotherhoods (cofradías), and the original and surprising experience of its Biblical/Passion processions. Different audiovisual features

show the most striking and thrilling moments of this creative and popular manifestation of faith. These museums showcase the fabrics and banners of the religious images carried by each brotherhood, as well as the rest of the cloaks worn by the historical figures who shared the life, passion and death of Jesus Christ. Also on

display are other Holy Week images and thrones carved by renowned sculptors and brought out for Easter processions. Another highlight of the visit is that you can access the workshops to see how Lorca embroiderers patiently carry out this painstaking artisanal technique, now vying for Cultural Heritage status.



SYNAGOGUE AND JEWISH QUARTER

Lorca also boasts non-ecclesiastical religious monuments, such as its **Synagogue** and the **Jewish Archaeological Park** (Parque Arqueológico de la Judería).

Medieval Lorca's Jewish quarter was located inside the citadel (alcazaba), separated by walls from the rest of the city. Covering an area of some 5,700 square meters, to date a total of 12 houses, and a synagogue dating from the fourteenth century, have been excavated, the only one found in the Región de Murcia.

Delve into Jewish culture and religion through the door of a building accessed through a courtyard. The prayer room is the space where the Torah Scrolls were once kept, a niche (hejal) that was decorated with Gothic-style plasterwork.

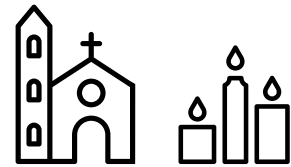
One can also see the remnants of the plinth where the Bimah was placed and the Torah was read.

HANUKKAH LIGHTING

In mid-December, on the occasion of the feasts of Moors, Christians and Jews, the Hanukkah Lighting takes place at the Synagogue. This is a **Jewish** festival that commemorates the defeat of the Hellenes and the recovery of Jewish independence at the hands of the Maccabees in the second century B.C. The custom consists of progressively lighting a nine-armed candlestick: the Hanukkah. In Lorca it is a cultural act that takes place between the end of November and the first half of December, and that in recent years has been celebrated at the **Synagogue of the Castle of Lorca** (Sinagoga del Castillo de Lorca).



CALASPARRA



+ Info

www.turismocalasparra.es
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

This Murcian town is famous for, in addition to its **Sanctuary of Our Lady of Hope** (Santuario de Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza), for its important rice fields, where Calasparra D.O. rice is produced. But it also features other ingredients that feed both body and soul. Its auspicious location and history give Calasparra a special appeal. Crossed by four rivers and with two swamps, its waters are a draw for travelers, thanks not only to the beauty of its landscape, but also for the variety of activities that can be enjoyed here, such as caving in the **Cueva del Puerto**, and canyoning. The Segura River descends through the **Almadenes Canyon**, in the **Cañaverosa Riverside Forest Natural Protected Area** (Espacio Natural Protegido de Bosque de Ribera de Cañaverosa), inhabited by some of the region's last otters; as well as a great variety of aquatic birds. Calasparra is also well known for its **caves and their paintings**, declared **World Heritage** by UNESCO; and for its **archeological sites**, containing Paleolithic and Hispanic-Muslim art.



SANCTUARY OF OUR LADY OF HOPE

The **Sanctuary of Our Lady of Hope**, patron saint of Calasparra, is located in the Lomas de la Virgen (Hills of the Virgin) area, a site of great beauty on the banks of the Segura River. Today, the Sanctuary is a renowned **pilgrimage site** that celebrated a Jubilee Holy Year in 2008.

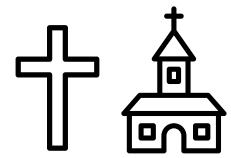
The first written references to the Sanctuary date from the **early seventeenth century**, when Alonso Benítez de Munera founded the Ermita (Hermitage) de la Fuensanta, today known as the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Hope. There is evidence, however,

suggesting that the Virgin was venerated long before this. Inside, the main **altarpiece** is of particular note, decorated in green and gold tones, with Marian symbols. In its center is the image of the Virgin, which is composed of two figures. The image of **Our Lady of Hope** (Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza), known as La Grande, is a classic dressed carving from the 16th and 17th centuries, whose head is the only original element, donated in 1617 by Doña Juana Sánchez. The image of La Pequeñica (The Little One) is a mystery, as its origins and date of production are unknown.

After passing the hermitage, in the attached building are the rooms of El Camarín (Side Chapel) and the Museum. In El Camarín various images of the Virgin are kept, while the Museum houses all the treasures of the Virgin, comprised of cloaks, jewelry and suits.

Other religious monuments in the town include the Church of St Peter (Iglesia de San Pedro), la Iglesia de Los Santos, la Iglesia de la Merced (Mercy), and two hermitages: the Ermita del Ecce-Homo and the Hermitage of St Michael (Ermita de San Miguel).

TOTANA



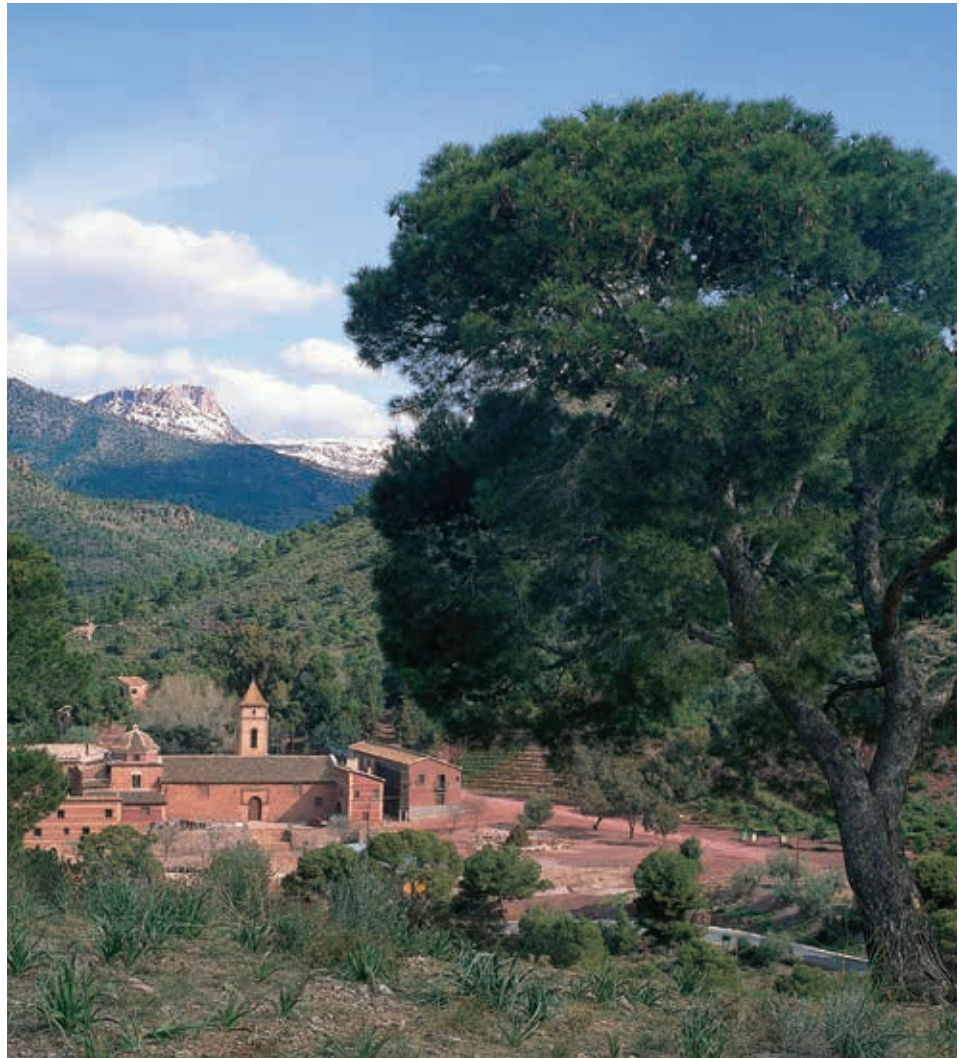
+ Info

www.turismo.totana.es
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

Totana boasts sites of touristic interest and of extraordinary beauty, and a great variety of landscapes.

Its historic center preserves stately homes dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and must-visit monuments such as the Church of St James (Iglesia de Santiago). It stands out for its great archaeological heritage, its highlight being La Bastida, the most powerful city in Continental Europe during the Bronze Age, 4,200 years ago; and a fortified square comparable to the second city of Troy.

It also boasts the special site of The Orchards (Los Huertos), composed of nineteenth-century houses surrounded by almond, orange and lemon trees accompanying the visitor on a climb to the Paraje de La Santa nature area, located in the Sierra Espuña Regional Park.



SANTUARIO DE SANTA EULALIA DE MÉRIDA “LA SANTA”



The Sanctuary of St. Eulalia of Mérida celebrated its Jubilee in honor of the saint in 2004. Located seven kilometers from the urban center of Totana, it venerates the image of **St Eulalia of Mérida**, patron saint of the city since 1644. This devotion spills over the town's borders and extends into other regions from which pilgrims and devotees, united by their faith, arrive. **The Knights of St. James** brought their devotion to Santa Eulalia to Totana. These

Murcian lands were donated by Alfonso X El Sabio (The Wise) in 1257 to the Military Order of St. James and its master, Pelayo Pérez Correa, a figure linked to the city of Mérida.

This religious monument has been declared a **Site of Cultural Interest**. In 1595 the hermitage, with a single nave, was covered with an impressive mudéjar coffered ceiling, one of the finest in Spain. The walls are completely painted using the temple

technique. Dating from the seventeenth century, they relate the life of Christ. This building is one of the most expressive examples of popular art in the entire Levant region.

In **El Paraje de La Santa** nature area one can enjoy an enclave of exceptional natural wealth. Its Carrasco pine forest and great variety of native plants have created a special corner in which to rest and enjoy nature.

CARTAGENA



+ Info

www.cartagenaturismo.es
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es



CARTAGENA'S EASTER WEEK

Cartagena's Holy Week is the city's quintessential festival. Declared of **International Touristic Interest**, solemnity, a military tone, and order characterize some of its processions, with deep roots among the people of Cartagena. The Friday of Sorrows and Resurrection Sunday are separated by ten days full of light, flowers, exceptional thrones and impressive garb and attire. The most well-attended events are characterized by their great fervor, such as the departure of St Peter (San Pedro) from the Arsenal, and El Encuentro (The Meeting) in the Square of Mercy (Plaza de la Merced). The **processions** of Cartagena's Holy Week are the first to leave in all of Spain - a good reason to start your days of well-deserved rest here.



Cartagena is a city boasting **more than 3,000 years of history**, with each of its corners, streets and squares attesting to its magnificent past. Its crown jewel is its **Roman Theater**, built under the Emperor Augustus in the first century BC, although it was not discovered until 1990. The Roman Theater Museum is a fascinating architectural ensemble designed by Rafael Moneo where each room is more spectacular than the last. It encompasses the Palacio de Pascual de Riquelme, La Catedral de Santa María, and, after flanking the last corridor, the most impressive stop of all: that of the Roman Theater.

Cartagena Port of Cultures (Puerto de Culturas) will allow you to enjoy the city's heritage and cultural wealth through a thematic unification of its contents. Discover its origins through the remnants of the **Punic Wall** (Muralla Púnica), witness to the foundation of the city by the Carthaginian general Hasdrubal

in the year 227 BC. In addition, its **Interpretation Center** explains to visitors, in detail and in an entertaining way, this fundamental part of local history and archaeology.

In the recently-restored **Quarter of the Roman Forum** (Barrio del Foro Romano) one finds a complete block of Roman Cartagena, including a spa complex dating from the 1st century AD; and the building of the atrium, from the end of the 1st century BC.

Walking through the city, visitors also appreciate how Cartagena preserves a military legacy dating back to medieval times. The Castillo de la Concepción, a castle with stunning views, houses the Interpretation Center, where visitors will discover many secrets of a Mediterranean city with great stories to tell.

ABANILLA

+ Info

www.abanilla.es
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

Located in the eastern region of the Región de Murcia, Abanilla is like **an oasis in the middle of the desert**. The aridity of its lunar landscape contrasts sharply with its fertile farmlands by the **Chícamo River**, which makes the municipality unique.

Strolling through the historic center of Abanilla is almost like going back to the past, especially during the **Moors and Christians Festival**, when battles from the era of the Reconquista are remembered and reenacted. Its people's faith and devotion are on display at the beginning of its traditional pilgrimage (romería), on May 3, in honor of the **Holy Cross** (Santa Cruz), leading to the Ermita (Hermitage) de Mahoya.

The event ends with a festive lunch at which traditional dishes and sweets are enjoyed, such as fried rabbit and monas con huevo, a typical pastry. We encourage travelers to discover the many hermitages found along the way, signs of the piety that has characterized this municipality ever since ancient times. We also recommend a visit to the **Church of St. Joseph** (Iglesia de San José), patron saint of Abanilla. In the Baroque style, it was built in the year 1700 under the command of the military and religious Order of Calatrava. One of its chapels houses the relic known as the **Holiest Cross of Abanilla** (Santísima Cruz de Abanilla). According to tradition, it is an ignum crucis (wooden cross) made from the beam on which Christ was crucified.



ULEA

+ Info

www.turismovalledericote.com
www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es

Ulea is, by definition, a **land of contrasts**, and it is here that dry landscapes and mountains converge with the lush Ricote Valley, in which the municipality sits, providing the traveler with a perfect excuse to make a stop along his way.

Walking its narrow and stepped streets, with the constant babble of water in its fountains, cisterns and waterwheels, evokes the Muslim heritage that infuses the valley. This is a legacy that can be appreciated at one of the municipality's most important monuments: **the Church of St. Bartholomew** (Iglesia de San Bartolomé), the oldest in the Ricote Valley. In it one can follow the evolution of the old mosque (before the fifteenth century) to the current church (from the end of the fifteenth century). Throughout the year it houses Ulea's lignum crucis, said to be from the cross on which Christ was crucified.

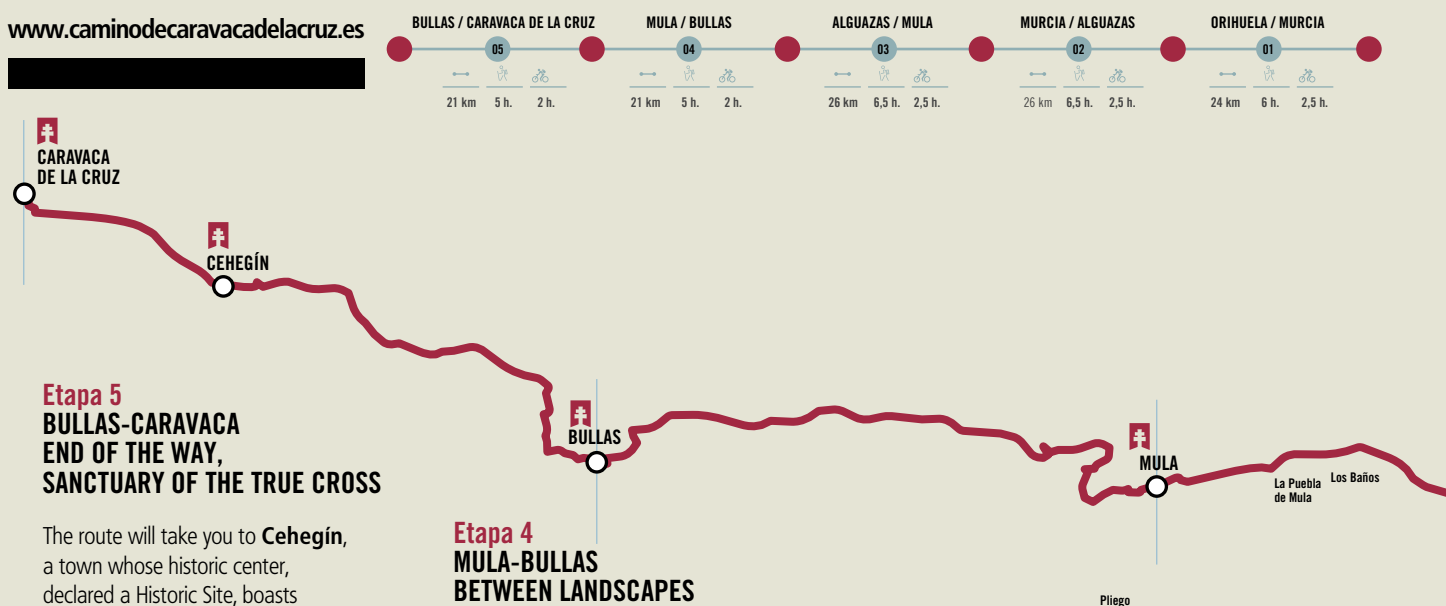
Other monuments worth visiting are the **Pila de la Reina Mora** (Basin of the Moorish Queen) a nature site and La Plaza del Henschidor, where the Holiest True Cross is "bathed" every May 3.



WAY OF THE CROSS

EASTERN WAY

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Etapla 5 BULLAS-CARAVACA END OF THE WAY, SANCTUARY OF THE TRUE CROSS

The route will take you to **Cehegín**, a town whose historic center, declared a Historic Site, boasts significant civil and religious heritage elements. In the end you'll reach your destination: the Holy **City of Caravaca de la Cruz**, a well-deserved reward of which you are bound to harbor sweet memories after having enjoyed unforgettable days on your pilgrimage.

Etapla 4 MULA-BULLAS BETWEEN LANDSCAPES AND VINEYARDS

The road delves deep into the region of the **Northwest**, with the landscape becoming more and more forested and mountainous. Upon entering the municipality of **Bullas**, you'll be surprised by its vineyards, as this region produces a high-quality wine that even has its own Designation of Origin.

Etapla 3 ALGUAZAS-MULA: A LAND OF CASTLES AND "BADLANDS"

You'll find a unique landscape, with contrasts between its arid badlands and the lush vegetation along the banks of the **Mula River**. The route passes through the tranquil municipalities of **Campos del Río**, where we invite you to walk Rosary Street (La Calle del Rosario), to ascend up to the Castle (Castillo), the Clock Tower (Torre del Reloj) and the Baroque **Church of St. John the Baptist** (Iglesia de San Juan Bautista; and **Albudeite**, with its Church of Our Lady of the Remedies (Nuestra Señora de los Remedios) as an indispensable stop. Finally, the section leads to **Los Baños de Mula**, a nature area whose hot springs will provide you with a well-deserved rest for body and soul.



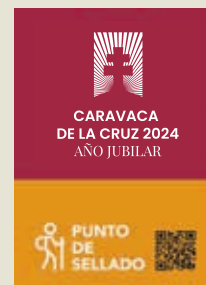
The Eastern Way (Camino de Levante) will guide your steps to Caravaca de la Cruz, on a route that runs between **ten municipalities** of the Region, from the neighboring city of Orihuela. Divided into 5 stages, or sections, **almost 120 km** of spirituality, culture, heritage, landscapes, food and festivities will make your pilgrimage a fun adventure. The Camino de Levante is also the first pilgrimage route fitted out with **QR signs** in each section, which will allow you to instantly obtain useful information about every step you take (maps, photos, points of interest...).

PILGRIM'S CARD

Don't forget your pilgrim's card, which will entitle you to a plenary indulgence when you arrive at the Sanctuary of the True Cross (Santuario de la Vera Cruz). There are very emblematic churches and monuments where you'll have the opportunity to get your credential stamped.

In addition to the **temples and places of worship**, they can also be sealed at the **region's Tourism Offices, places authorized** for this, and at any of the establishments affiliated with the Camino de Levante (Eastern Way). Get it stamped!

+ Info www.caminodecaravacadelacruz.es



Etapa 2 MURCIA - ALGUAZAS A WALK THROUGH THE ORCHARD OF MURCIA

From **Murcia** you will advance along the left bank of the river, passing through hamlets harboring secrets of Murcia's orchards, until you reach the dam area known as the Azud Mayor, or Contraparada de Murcia, a place to stop and behold the intense relationship between this city and the waters of the Segura River ever since ancient times. If along the way you feel like enjoying some great cultural and leisure offerings, there's nothing like a stop in **Molina de Segura**, where you can visit, among other things, the Museum of the Enclave of the Wall (Museo del Enclave de la Muralla, or MUDEM). In **Alguazas** the Parish Church of St Onofre (Iglesia Parroquial de San Onofre) and the Tower of the Moors (Torre de los Moros), and the Tower of the Bishop (Torre del Obispo), dating from the twelfth century.

Etapa 1 ORIHUELA - MURCIA THE SEGURA RIVER GUIDES YOU ALONG THE WAY

The section begins a few meters from the Catedral del Salvador (Savior) in **Orihuela** before crossing the Tajo-Segura inter-basin diversion and reaching **Beniel**. An alternative route also allows you to cross the river through the site of the twin waterwheels. The city of - Murcia awaits, where you can visit its imposing Cathedral, located in the heart of its old town.



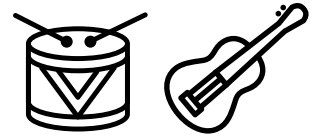
THE FLAVORS OF THE WAY

As walking makes one hungry, we encourage you to savor some of the Way's most traditional dishes and products: stews, migas (a bread crumb dish), Segura lamb... You'll discover a great variety of typical rice dishes, with vegetables, rabbit, chicken, chickpeas, escargot, ... not to mention the delicious sausages and cheeses, and typical sweets, such as *yemas de Caravaca*; and liquors and wines of a land with its Bullas, Jumilla and Yecla Designations of Origin.

TRADITION AND RELIGIOUS EVENTS, FERVOR AND POPULAR CELEBRATIONS

+ Info

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Among its religious traditions and events, the Holy Week celebrated in the Región de Murcia stands out. Sometimes hidden behind hoods, and other times with faces uncovered, religious sentiment blossoms in the spring, to the sounds of horns and drums. Silence and devotion fill the streets, and sacred art takes over every city and every town in Murcia.

All with the same spirit, but with completely different rites and customs. This is, precisely, the richness of these celebrations, each with their own hallmarks, proudly enjoying the highest recognitions.

Declared of International Touristic Interest:

- Holy Week in Cartagena
- Holy Week in Murcia
- Holy Week in Lorca
- Holy Week in Jumilla
- Festivities in Honor of the Holiest and True Cross of Caravaca (Santísima y Vera Cruz de Caravaca)
- The Night of Drums (La Noche de los Tambores) in Mula.
- Holy Week in Cieza

Declared of National Touristic Interest:

- Patron Saint Festivities in Honor of the Purest Conception of Yecla (Purísima Concepción de Yecla)





WHERE TO STAY

You're bound to find, among a wide range of accommodations and coastal, urban and rural hotels, the one that is best for you. Modern, recently-built facilities, or more traditional buildings but that include all the services needed to make your stay a great experience. Some also have spas and water treatments to pamper you like you deserve; the ideal reward if you want to rest, escape from the daily grind, and sleep like a baby.

Check out the variety of accommodations in the Región de Murcia at:
www.turismoregiondemurcia.es





Costa Cálida
**REGIÓN
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SPAIN

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